

**TESTIMONY OF U.S. SENATOR JOHN CORNYN**

**BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY**

**Nomination of Earl Leroy Yeakel to be  
U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Texas**

Wednesday, June 25, 2003, 2 p.m.  
Dirksen Senate Office Building Room 215

---

Thank you for calling this hearing, Mr. Chairman, and for providing me with the opportunity to testify on behalf of a great judge and a great Texan. It is my great pleasure this afternoon to introduce Justice Earl "Lee" Yeakel, nominated to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.

Justice Yeakel is an outstanding nominee with a fine legal mind and fair judicial disposition. He enjoys the respect of jurists and lawyers from across the state of Texas. The *Austin American-Statesman* has opined that "[h]e would be an excellent choice by training, background and temperament," and I couldn't agree more with those sentiments. I am firmly of the belief that, if confirmed, Justice Yeakel would be a welcome addition to the Western District of Texas.

For the past five years, Justice Yeakel has served on the Third District Court of Appeals in Austin, Texas. That court hears both civil and criminal appeals from twenty-four counties in central Texas.

Before his appointment to that court, Justice Yeakel engaged in the private practice of law for twenty-nine years, aside from a two and a half year engagement as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps.

He graduated from the University of Texas Law School in 1969. In 2001, he earned a Master of Laws degree in Judicial Process from the University of Virginia School of Law. That is a fantastic educational program for judges, one that is especially close to my heart, because I too attended and graduated from that program.

In addition to his legal excellence, Justice Yeakel is a civic leader who is active in his community. He is a member of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Austin, the Board of Advisers of the Longhorn Foundation, Leadership Austin, and the President of the Rotary Club of Austin. He sits on the boards of directors of the West Austin Little League, the West Austin Youth Association, and the Committee for Wild Basin Wilderness.

Justice Yeakel is a fair-minded judge who is committed to the principle that judges interpret and not make law. I strongly support his nomination and I hope that the committee will give him every consideration.